

Amendment  
Serial No. 09/574,449

Docket No. PHB 34,345

REMARKS

The Office Action dated May 14, 2004 has been reviewed and carefully considered. Claims 13-20 have been added. None of the claims have been amended.

Claims 1 and 4-20 are pending, the independent claims being 1, 13 and 18.

Reconsideration of the above-identified application, as amended and in view of the following remarks, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1 and 4-12 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,646,699 to Oh et al. ("Oh").

Claim 1 recites, "enables selective output of the two or more audio channel signals to a plurality of external speakers and the one or more speakers . . ."

Item 4 of the Office Action cites lines 8-65 of column 4 of Oh. Lines 31-32 refer to "an external speaker." The applicants can find no other disclosure or suggestion in Oh of an external speaker. Oh fails to disclose or suggest "a plurality of external speakers" which limitation appears explicitly in claim 1 of the present invention.

Accordingly, for at least this reason, the cited reference fails to anticipate the invention as recited in claim 1. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

As to the other rejected claims, each depends from a base claim and is deemed to patentably distinguish over the reference for at least the same reasons, although each warrants further consideration based on its additional, individual merits. For example, claim 7 recites that the receiver of claim 1 is "coupled with an audio receiver and, via the audio receiver, to the plurality of speakers, wherein the audio

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receiver has an output for a centre audio channel connected to said input of the television receiver.” Item 4 of the Office Action cites FIG. 3, col. 3, lines 33-37 and col. 4, lines 8-44. Although one of these passages mentions a single external speaker, as mentioned above, the applicants have been unable to find anything in this citation that supports a rejection of the limitations specific to claim 7. Item 4 of the Office Action, merely concludes that the one external speaker is a center channel, without citing any basis for the conclusion. The recitation in claim 7 of an audio receiver and the limitation regarding connection of center channel to “said input” is ignored by the Office Action. Almost unbelievably, in fact, the Office Action deems this is an anticipation rejection.

Claims 13-20 have been added to emphasize aspects of what the applicants consider to be the invention. Claims 13 and 18 find support in originally-filed claims 1 and 7 and in the specification (e.g. page 6, lines 16-32). Claims 14-17 and 19-20 find support in originally-filed claims 2, 3, 5 and 7.

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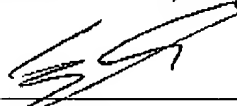
For all the foregoing reasons, it is respectfully submitted that all the present claims are patentable in view of the cited references. A Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested.

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Respectfully submitted,

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8/10/04

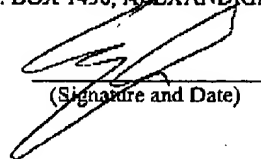
  
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